

## Note on the Malay Game 'Jongkak.'

BY M. HELLIER.

I lately obtained, and sent to the Raffles Museum for exhibition, the playing-board and seeds for the Malay game "Jongkak."

Haji Othman the Visiting Teacher of Province Wellesley, from whom I obtained the board, describes Jongkak as a women's game originally played by the ladies at the courts of the Malay Rajas. The playing board is shaped like a junk or boat, and, according to Haji Othman, the name of the game is derived from "jong" a junk. The board has 7 holes on each side, with a larger hole or compartment at each end.

The game is one for two people and is usually played with Tamarind or other seeds, but marbles are now sometimes used. Each player has one "village" (kampong) or row of holes, and in each side hole she places 7 seeds. The board is then ready for play.

The players start together. Each player taking the 7 seeds from the hole on her right and carrying them from right to left, drops one in each hole, the last seed falling into the large hole at the end. This seed is said to have "entered the house" (naik rumah) and this house belongs to the player on whose left it lies.

Each player then takes all the seeds from any one of the other holes in her "village" and moving as before from right to left around the board again drops a seed into each hole, taking care to drop one into her own 'house' but none into her opponent's.

Should the last seed fall into an empty hole the player is dead (mati), and must wait until the other player is 'dead' before she can again play. If this hole is in the player's own "village" any seeds in the opposite hole on her opponent's side may be taken and put into the "house." This is said to be (?) "a sacrifice" (mati béla).

When the last seed falls into a hole in which there are other seeds, these are taken and the player continues in play, and should the last seed fall into the player's "house" she also continues in play, taking the seeds from any hole in her "village."

When no more seeds remain in a player's "village" she is said to be "once defeated" (kalah sa-papan). She may however, take any seeds there may be in her "house" and place them again in the holes in her "village" putting 7 in a hole as before. Should any holes be left empty they are called "ruined wells" (telaga burok) and the player owning "ruined wells" must wait until her opponent is dead before playing again.

The game goes on in this way until a player has lost all her seeds. She is then "utterly destroyed" (mati kena abu). Skeat, who calls the game "chongkak," gives a short description of it in his "Malay Magic."